

IDAHO LOGGING SAFETY NEWS



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Dirk Kempthorne, Governor
Dave Munroe, Administrator
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FIRST AID & SAFETY TRAINING CLASSES 2002

It's hard to believe but it is that time of the year again. As you can see by the following schedule, first aid classes will be starting in early March. The classes will be pretty similar to past years with training provided in first aid, CPR and emergency rescue as well as training in some of the federal requirements relating to hazard communication, blood-borne pathogens, hearing conservation and tagout-energy control. These classes are a cooperative effort between the Associated Logging Contractors and Idaho Logging Safety.

It is important to note that after many years of study, the American Heart Association has made some minor

changes in the way that the layperson does CPR and we will be demonstrating these. Once again, they have tried to make it simpler for us common folk.

Equipment dealers from the local areas will provide donuts and rolls at 7 AM and classes will start promptly at 8 AM. These classes are for ALL loggers in the State of Idaho. Wives are also encouraged to attend. It would be greatly appreciated if the contractors would call the ALC (1-800-632-8743) and give them some idea of how many of their employees will be attending both the morning and afternoon classes.

DATE CITY LOCATION				DATE CITY LOCATION			
March 1	Friday	Potlatch	VFW Hall	March 18	Monday	Pierce	Community Ctr
March 4	Monday	Bonnars Ferry	Fair Grounds	March 19	Tuesday	Grangeville	Elk's Lodge
March 5	Tuesday	Sandpoint	Eagle's Lodge	March 20	Wednes.	Donnelly	Fire Hall
March 6	Wednes.	Coeur d'Alene	Armory	April 8	Monday	St. Maries	Eagle's Lodge
March 11	Monday	St. Maries	Eagle's Lodge	April 9	Tuesday	Kellogg	Elk's Lodge
March 12	Tuesday	Orofino	Armory	April 15	Monday	Emmett	Senior Center
March 13	Wednes.	Deary	Lion's Club	April 17	Wednes.	St. Anthony	City Hall
				April 18	Thursday	Salmon	Stagecoach Inn

The Pro-Logger Program will follow these classes in the afternoon. The sawmills will provide lunch for those who are going to attend.

EMERGENCY RESCUE??

By Cliff Osborne



Several years ago we were on a real good strip of line logs and all the crew was making lots of money. It was the best strip we ever had. Jake was running the 98-link belt and we were yarding three to four pieces every turn. The strip of logs was so thick it looked like cordwood stacked around the hillside. Jake was decking the logs across the road and the deck was getting really high. A big turn came up the hill and he had his boom up high to get the logs up on the deck. Jake was fighting the logs trying to get them to slide into the deck.

Then it happened! The boom came over backwards because we hadn't put the boom stop back on. The mainline and skyline got around the cab and ripped it off with Jake in the middle of the tangled mess. I managed to get out of the way without getting hit. I went running over to what was the cab side of the 98. There was Jake, hanging with his neck pinned between the tin ware of the cab and one of the lines. I grabbed an axe and was going to chop the line in two. By that time Pete had topped the hill and saw what I was going to do and yelled, "Let me get a hold of him before you chop him loose or the fall will kill him!!"

Well, we managed to get him down. His head was cut up badly and he had one ear torn off. He was shaking and kicking a lot and then suddenly he stopped. We thought Jake was dead so we put him in the back of the pickup and headed for town. We were about two hours out and had no radio to call for help. About one hour into the trip I heard something tapping on the rear window. I opened the slider and there was Jake, wide-eyed and white as a ghost, asking if one of us had a cigarette.

So much for our first aid and emergency rescue procedures.



Near Miss

A loader operator was loading a truck late in the afternoon when a hose broke. Rather than leave the truck in the woods all night or haul a partial load, he decided to run quickly to town in his pickup and grab a new hose. Thinking that there would be no one else on the road at that time of day, meeting a logging truck was quite a surprise. Needless to say, pickup trucks never fare too well when they come into contact with logging trucks. Luckily no one was seriously injured.

Just because it's late in the day and you USUALLY don't meet anyone, is no reason to think that there won't be somebody out getting firewood, a Christmas tree or that last load of logs to clean up the strip.

IDAHO'S LOGGING SAFETY ADVISORS

David Kludt	(208) 935-1216
Don Hull	(208) 667-8646
Cliff Osborne	(208) 875-0690
Galen Hamilton	(208) 793-2639

WILCOX LOGGING

By Galen Hamilton

Blaine and Gary Wilcox operate a logging company in the wilds of southeastern Idaho. Even though their company is not what you would consider large, they seem to turn up wherever I go. Just when I think I am scouting out some prime elk hunting country or about to drive off the edge of the earth, I come around the bend and there they are logging away.

Blaine and Gary are typical loggers, quiet and hard working. Gary tries to put up a front that he is growly, but after knowing him for quite a few years



now I have come to the conclusion that he is a pussy cat (I'll be in trouble for that). Blaine is

quick with a smile and never, ever gets excited about anything. Well, maybe just once in awhile!



L to R ~ Rocky Zarrago, Blaine Wilcox & Jim Huml

Wilcox

Logging does most of its work for Jenson Lumber out of Ovid. Blaine, Gary and their crew do a very good job of logging which, of course, Jenson's appreciate. When the landowners and foresters for the different agencies are happy, things just go better.

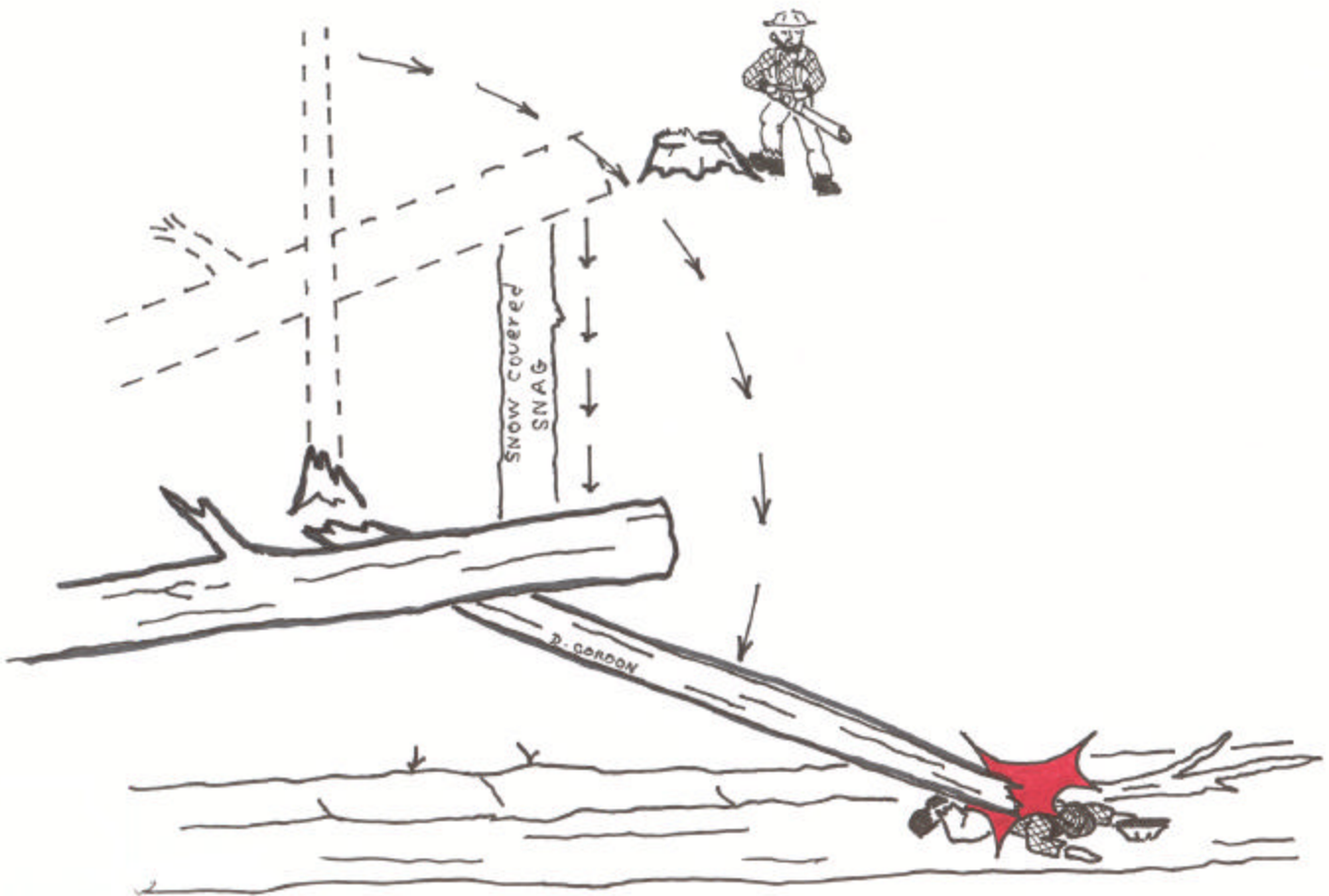
The Wilcox brothers like to joke around and give the safety guy trouble, but I can honestly say that they have always taken safety on their jobs seriously. When I started doing this safety work, their dad, Earl, was running the show but has since turned the reins over to the boys. You would have to look hard to find a nicer bunch of people.

This is Scott Bonnalie. Scott drives the self-loader for Konkolville Lumber Co. in Orofino. Scott logged for many years and can still remember how to grab an axe and cut a few limbs without complaining. He always has a smile on his face and something positive to say to help pick up your day. If you don't wave when you meet him, you're liable to get a call at 3 in the morning with a reminder. Scott said he has only been injured once in his logging career. That came just 20 days into his first job when somebody tightened the front wrapper on the load first, causing a shorty to flip off and hit him on his head and shoulder. That was many years ago and his last accident in the woods; sadly, the same cannot be said about his motorcycle riding career.



FATALITY NUMBER 2 2001

A timber faller was killed when a small tree struck him. The victim was standing in the road below his falling partner. His partner fell a tree exactly where they both knew it was intended to go. The butt of the felled tree, however, then shot down the hill on a snag that was buried in the snow. After traveling quite a distance, the butt smashed into a small standing tree, breaking it off, sending it at an angle back toward the victim in the road.



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

By David Kludt

By now, most of you are done with winter logging and anxiously awaiting the barrage of training classes, conferences and other meetings that seem to have become a part of logging. Apparently there is a little more to this logging than just cutting down a tree and skidding it to the landing.

You are probably aware that insurance rates are going up this year. One frustrating part of our job is to see the efforts and positive results that the loggers have accomplished with safety, only to be negated by ever increasing medical costs. If it's any consolation, it sounds like the rates are going to go up in all of the western states. Obviously these rate increases do not reflect how good of a job you are doing.

If you thought you had been knocked from our mailing list in December, you were not. As you are aware, things have slowed down in the State budget just as they have slowed down for you. We decided that one of the things we could do, at least in the short term, was to cut out one of our newsletters. Who knows where this will all end up but as the song kinda goes, if it ain't good for you, it ain't good for us.

We had two fatalities in Idaho last year. A hooker was killed early in the year and then a timber faller late in the year. I can't describe the feeling of having to investigate one of these, but I'd rather be sawing a stump off under a stuck cat in -30 degree weather in 4 feet of snow with one track off on Friday afternoon at 5 o'clock than go through it. Knowing what the family and crewmembers are experiencing is a terrible feeling.

Enough said. We look forward to seeing you at one of the many training classes that will be held this spring.

IDAHO PRO-LOGGER TRAINING

By Don Hull

Once again there will be an afternoon schedule of classes for the Pro-Logger Certification that most sawmills in the state are requiring for their loggers. These classes follow the morning first aid meeting and will start out with a lunch provided by the sawmills, followed by a number of topics. The sawmills will have a representative explain what this Pro-Logger training is about and why it is so important to the timber industry. This will be followed with an update by the Department of Lands on the Forest Practices rules as well as some of the common problem areas that have been encountered throughout the year in different areas of the state. George Miller (ALC) will be giving a presentation on how to do an accident investigation and why it is important. This will be followed by the safety geeks giving an overview of the most prevalent accidents that were incurred last year and what we think can be done to help eliminate them. The class will finish with an update of what OSHA looked at on logging jobs in Idaho last year, including what the main citations were and the penalties.

I realize that many of the logging companies in the state are presently certified. If you are not and need more information on what to do, call the Associated Logging Contractors office in Coeur d'Alene at 1-800-632-8743.

One of the primary steps in becoming certified is for the contractor and "key" people to attend one of the LEAP programs that will be made available this spring. These classes have already been scheduled and you need to call and register.

LEAP classes offered for the spring of 2002 include:

March 13-15 Orofino
March 20-22 Coeur d'Alene

March 27-29 Bonners Ferry
April 10-12 St. Maries

April 24-26 Sandpoint
May 1-3 Moscow

By Galen Hamilton

MORE TRAINING?

A while back, Kludt told us to come up with some ideas for the logger's accreditation training this spring. Trying to get some help, I asked a few friends if they had anything in mind. The one fellow responded, "Anything you talk about will probably confuse us, we're just STUPID OLD LOGGERS"! As I looked around that logging job and then later driving down the road, I kept thinking of just what is expected out of loggers these days, and the one word that did NOT come to mind was stupidity.

How many other professions can you think of that require all of its employees to know first-aid, how to deal with hazardous material, and be trained to handle an emergency rescue? They need to know the laws and rules about the land they work on, the product requirements of the mill they work for and the policies of the company for which they are employed. Oh, yes, the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in how the insurance business works and being a

public relations expert doesn't hurt, either. And that is before they get to their place of employment, the woods.

Landing men need to be able to manufacture logs to the exact lengths the mills require, and "there shant be any missed limbs or rot." Well, you can have a certain percentage of rot, but if it's too much, your company will be penalized, and if you cut off too much the forester will yell and your company will be penalized. The landing men do their job in the mud, dust and snow, each under constant pressure to produce an amount of work, which is probably meant for two or three people. And in the end their logs are laid out in a big, flat yard, where the sun always shines, for some log scaler to pick and prod at, with the goal of finding something wrong.

There are many log processors in the woods these days. The operators of these machines are under as much pressure as the landing men, maybe not as physical work but mentally exhausting. They make the same log quality judgments a thousand times a day. Since everything is computerized, these loggers are also part time computer geeks. I walked by a processor earlier this season and one of those "stupid loggers" had the computer out of the machine and torn all apart on the tail gate of his pickup, pieces and parts everywhere. I made a comment about how

much it was going to cost to have someone from NASA come to the woods and put it back together. A couple of hours later I came back by and that processor was kicking logs out as fast as I could count. The operator/computer geek was just a smiling away.

Timber fallers are in a league of their own. They are sent to some rocky, steep hillside to fall certain trees (many times marked by people with a few days of experience in the woods) in a way that does not damage the trees left standing or the next generation of trees that are just starting to grow. They need to be able to judge height, lean, diameter, amount of rot and how much holding wood to leave in a few seconds. An engineer would come up with the answer, too, given a couple of days. The trees need to be felled to skid out easily, which may require bucking the tree at the exact length, but only the bigger ones that the processor can't handle, then limb them, unless they're too close to the creek, then just buck them and don't limb them until the saw boss comes along and asks how come they skidded some logs that weren't limbed-----AAAHHHH! The timber fallers are usually making these decisions while wallowing in chest deep snow or with a nest full of hornets on their tail.

Equipment operators also have it easy. All the skidding crew has to do is travel down trails

usually constructed about a third narrower than the machine they are operating while skidding some trees that are constantly trying to drag them over a cliff. Once off the hill, all the equipment operators get to work on a road that has been engineered with an outslope that will handle the runoff from the next ice age.

Truck drivers also get the pleasure of hauling the logs out on these same roads. Many of these roads are so narrow and steep that one miscue can spell disaster. With the wintertime ice and snow, each trip becomes an adventure of its own. Then the scary part starts: they reach the highway! It is obvious that many in the general public do not have to obey the same laws as the rest of us. Pulling out directly in front of an 80,000-pound truck seems to be very popular. Apparently when some people find themselves behind a logging truck, they feel compelled to pass, no matter what. After they pass, it is then

acceptable to slow down immediately, except for passing lanes, for the rest of the trip to town. The truck drivers have to deal with this, but only three or four times a day.

I haven't talked about hookers who work on ground so steep that just stumbling can cause an injury, while they figure out how to skid logs that sometimes resemble pick up sticks. Knowing which logs to send that will slip out easily while still getting maximum volume is a knack that looks a whole lot easier than it is. What about the loggers that set up the machines that span cables for thousands of feet over cliffs and canyons? Being able to secure the machine to withstand unbelievable weights and stresses would leave many mathematicians scratching their heads, and yet, time after time the operator knows just when to stop pulling by the sound and feel of the machine. This is, once again, a skill that experts would need to spend

considerable time and testing equipment to acquire.

Then there's the loader operator. At three o'clock in the morning, he has to sort pulp, saw logs, peelers, beaver bait, in a split second without the use of a tape or scale stick on marginal timber at best. Plus, he has to solve all the problems that truck drivers have, many of which would make a psychiatrist crazy.

Oh, I almost forgot. In all the scenarios I have mentioned above, no one is supposed to ever be injured.

Now, Dave wants me to figure out something to teach these fellows. I think that maybe, just maybe, the people that are always getting taught should sometimes do the teaching.

"Stupid logger," I don't think so!

A group of kids learning logging safety from Don Hull at the Canyon School in Cataldo. Don decided he had to start teaching them when they were young and still willing to learn.



OPEN FACED UNDERCUT

Don't make a good falling technique a safety hazard

By Cliff Osborne



The open faced undercut can be used in place of the humbolt or conventional undercut and works well, especially on small diameter trees under twenty-four inches.

What I see happening with the open face cut is that sawyers are not cutting the face deep enough and only cutting into the sapwood for the undercut. Some species of timber have fiber that is so pliable that the tree is still

attached to the stump when it is lying on the ground. This boded tree can become a safety hazard when the butt is cut loose from the stump due to excessive sweep or bind. Several accidents have occurred when a sawyer cut a tree loose that was loaded with this type of energy.

One sawyer that used the open face cut for many years said, *"if you fall a tree up the hill there is an increased chance that the momentum of the tree will cause the butt to split when it hits the ground."* Another problem that occurs is that some sawyers are leaving the tree attached to the stump and when the tree is choked and skidded, several feet of wood is slabbed off the bowl of the tree. This creates a defect that usually has to be bucked off losing several feet of wood.

Now we get into winter time and guess what? The sap wood freezes when the temperature gets down close to zero and with the undercut in the sapwood, you basically have no holding wood. So, for just the opposite reason of summer sawing, you need to make the undercut deeper to get into the heartwood that is not frozen.

The bottom line is if the open face undercut is used make sure you saw deep enough that you are in wood that will break when it hits the ground in the summer and hold better in the winter.

Todd Smith is all smiles as he stands next to the new lowboy truck that he drives for Foust Logging from Bonners Ferry.



Mike Davis has time to stop and talk a little



bit of safety when I was on a Foust job site near Copper Falls north of Bonners Ferry this fall. Mike was running a 648 John Deere grapple skidder.

SKIDDER ROLLOVER

By Galen Hamilton

A logger received injuries when the rubber tired skidder he was operating rolled several times. Complications from the injuries did not allow this logger to return to work for quite some time, but the results of this accident could have very easily been a lot worse.

The accident occurred when the crew was moving the yarder to allow the skidder to get around them. The skidder operator pulled out to the edge of the road to make room for the yarder to go by. He apparently had the outside wheels completely off the road where he had driven up on some rocks. According to the eye witnesses, the skidder started to tip up and the operator seemed to start to get out of the skidder. The skidder then tipped back down and the operator returned to his seat. At that time the rocks gave way and the skidder started its very ugly trip to the bottom of the draw.

The skidder rolled and flipped a number of times while covering the 300 plus feet. The crew that witnessed this also reported that halfway down the hill the skidder flipped up in the air and hit a very significant sized tree, which they were sure would stop the skidder's progress. To their amazement, the

tree uprooted and on went the skidder. Even though the canyon had very steep sides, the skidder was going fast enough to roll through the creek and **UP THE OTHER SIDE!** At that time the terrified crew started over the hill knowing in their hearts what they were about to find.

Not finding the operator on the hillside on their way off, they finally reached the skidder. There, jammed behind the seat was their friend, a little disoriented with eyes and mouth full of dirt, but sure enough alive! You loggers know how much room there is behind the seat of a skidder and will understand that the crew reported they had a heck of a time getting him out of there.

The combination of the skidder canopy holding up and the operator being jammed in that tiny place saved this young man's life. For the crew that witnessed this and even for those of us that saw the area it happened in, it is easy to understand why the owner of the company reported, **"WE ARE THE LUCKIEST LOGGING CREW IN IDAHO!"**

Maybe this is a good place to add this side note. When accidents happen, such as this skidder tipping over, I mention it to other loggers I meet around the country. My intention is just to remind the loggers that "Hey, if it can happen on that side hill it can happen here." When I mentioned this particular accident, however, every logger who has sat in the seat of a skidder had a story about

how easy it is to get one over the bank. Many of you also said that a lot of the times a skidder gets in trouble when the operator pulls out to the edge of the road, then attempts to pull back on.

This even reminded me of one of my screw-ups (yes, there were many) early in my lumberjack career. After many days of begging, the boss finally gave me the chance to operate the rubber tired skidder. "Just start it and bring it up to the landing", he said. I jumped on that big ol' thing, fired it up, threw it in gear, turned it just so, gave it the fuel and ---the back end started over the bank. Now wait a minute, I thought, you got to get the front end headed the way you're going, but if I do that the back end is headed the way I don't want to go. Maybe backing up would be the answer---further over the bank. The glamour of being a skidder operator was quickly fading. Should I walk up to the landing and ask for help? If I couldn't get the skidder a quarter mile up a perfectly good road, what chance was there ever being allowed to skid logs off a hill? No, I would not give up. Ten minutes later, the skidder was completely off the road, leaning precariously against a tree, and I was walking toward the landing contemplating going back to changing sprinkler pipes on the farm.

If you have an operator starting out, take the time to go over different situations that may occur and how to handle them. Encouraging employees to ask for help before they get into serious trouble is not a bad company policy to have. Another good policy, of course, is keeping Galen off of anything you own.



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Call (208) 334-3950 or write:
Idaho Logging Safety News
Logging Safety Bureau
PO Box 83720
Boise ID 83720-0048

David Kludt
Idaho Logging Safety
HCH Box 82
Kamiah, ID 83536

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